C1 end

illuminating the rear surface of the transmissive display panel simultaneously with a powered backlight and the diffuse ambient light directed toward the rear surface of the transmissive display panel; and

controlling the illumination of the rear surface of the transmissive display panel with the powered backlight according to a detected amount of ambient light.

C2

30. (Amended) The method of claim 29 in which the controlling of the illumination of the rear surface of the transmissive display panel includes detecting the amount of light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel, the light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel including diffuse ambient light from the ambient light diffuser and light provided by the powered backlight.

31. (Amended) The method of claim 28 in which the controlling of the illumination of the rear surface of the transmissive display panel includes detecting the amount of light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel, the light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel including diffuse ambient light from the ambient light diffuser and light provided by the powered backlight.

C3 cont'd

33. (Amended) The method of claim 32 in which controlling the illumination of the rear surface of the transmissive display panel with the powered backlight includes minimizing power delivered to the powered backlight to maintain the user selected brightness level, wherein minimizing power delivered to the powered backlight includes turning the powered backlight completely off while maintaining the user selected brightness level.

34. (Amended) A method of controlling backlight illumination of a transmissive display device according to a user selected brightness level, the display device including a transmissive display panel having a viewing front side a light-receiving rear side, the method comprising:

receiving ambient light via an ambient light diffuser and directing diffuse ambient light toward the rear surface of the transmissive display panel to illuminate it;

C3 end

illuminating the rear surface of the transmissive display panel simultaneously with a powered backlight and the diffuse ambient light directed toward the rear surface of the transmissive display panel; and

minimizing the illumination of the rear surface of the transmissive display panel with the powered backlight according to the user selected brightness level and the detected amount of ambient light, wherein minimizing illumination of the rear surface of the transmissive display panel with the powered backlight includes turning the powered backlight completely off while maintaining the user selected brightness level.

36. (Amended) The method of claim 35 in which the controlling of the illumination of the rear surface of the transmissive display panel includes detecting the amount of light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel, the light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel including diffuse ambient light from the ambient light diffuser and light provided by the powered backlight.

C4 Cont'd

37. (Amended) The method of claim 34 in which the controlling of the illumination of the rear surface of the transmissive display panel includes detecting the amount of light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel, the light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel including diffuse ambient light from the ambient light diffuser and light provided by the powered backlight.

38. (Amended) A transmissive display device, comprising:

a transmissive display panel having a viewing front side a light-receiving rear side;

a transmissive ambient light diffuser through which ambient light passes to form diffuse ambient light that is directed toward the rear surface of the transmissive display panel;

a backlight operable to generate and direct light at the rear surface of the transmissive display panel simultaneously with the diffuse ambient light being directed toward the rear surface of the transmissive display panel;

an ambient light detector for detecting an amount of ambient light at about at least one of the front and rear sides of the display panel; and

a backlight intensity control circuit for controlling the intensity of the backlight according to a detected amount of light at about at least one of the front and rear sides of the display panel.

40. (Amended) The display device of claim 39 in which the ambient light detector detects the amount of light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel, the light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel including diffuse ambient light from the ambient light diffuser and light provided by the powered backlight.

41. (Amended) The display device of claim 38 in which the ambient light detector detects the amount of light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel, the light at about the light-receiving rear side of the display panel including diffuse ambient light from the ambient light diffuser and light provided by the powered backlight.

43. (Amended) The display device of claim 42 in which controlling the intensity of the backlight includes minimizing power delivered to the backlight to maintain the user selected brightness level, wherein minimizing illumination of the rear surface of the transmissive display panel with the powered backlight includes turning the powered backlight completely off while maintaining the user selected brightness level.